

A FEW MORE WORDS
ON THE
CHIVALRY OF THE SOUTH.

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THE necessarily narrow limits of a publication of this nature make it so difficult, not to say impossible, to do justice to any subject, that I may, I trust, be excused for returning a second time to the same. On a former occasion I glanced very cursorily at the political acts and individual influence of those men whom their friends have been pleased to uphold as the gentlemen, *par excellence*, of America, and to praise under the title of "chivalrous." I wish now to examine a little further, and see how far the social condition of the country they have governed for a hundred years gives evidence that their public influence has been beneficial.

The condition of any country, as more or less civilised, as sharing more or less in the general progress which is the boast of the nineteenth century, may be tested by appeal to evidence which no party-pleadings can gainsay; such, for instance, as the amount of public instruction, secular and religious, enjoyed by the people; the facilities of intercourse, the state of trade and agriculture,

the scale of domestic comforts easily attainable, and therefore widely spread; and, perhaps, beyond all the degree of public security and order which prevail, and the power and due administration of the law. What will the evidence of these things reveal concerning the Slave States of America?

Taking the means of education in the widest sense, we include under that head all that tends to promote the moral and intellectual improvement of a people: schools for different classes, colleges, churches, literature. It is curious to note how these things stand in the Southern States, and especially to see what proportion they bear to the same things in the North. Olmsted in his "Journey and Explorations through the Cotton Kingdom,"* quotes largely from "White's Statistics of Georgia," which exhibit a painfully low social condition in that State. He gives in detail the number and distribution of the schools in the different counties; Olmsted, giving an abstract of his statements, says,† "The school-houses are on an average ten and a half miles apart in the less populous, thirteen and three quar-

* This work of Mr Olmsted's is a compilation of three different works of his on journies made at various times through the Slave States before the recent period of agitation. When he first determined to visit them, he says that he was under favourable impressions towards the Southern men. He disliked slavery on grounds of justice and humanity, but was not of the Abolition party, and was utterly unprepared for the disastrous effects of the system upon the community at large, which he has since so ably set forth. The present work was published when the Secession was pending, with a view to influence public opinion on that subject.

† Olmsted, vol. ii., p. 295.

ter miles apart in the more populous counties." Let any one consider what can be the attendance at schools so situated.

Governor Seabrooke, of South Carolina, in an address to the Legislature of the State some years ago, complained that the education paid for by the Government in free schools was monopolised by the wealthy, while the poor remained destitute of instruction. "Ten years ago," he says, "twenty thousand adults, besides children, were unable to read or write in South Carolina. Are there not reasonable fears that the numbers have increased since that period?"*

In North Carolina a similar state of things exists. Olmsted (vol. i., p. 190) gives the following table, quoted from the official census report.

"The native white population of North

Carolina	550,267
The white population under 20 years	301,106
Leaving white adults over 20 years	249,161
Of these, the number that cannot read	
or write, is	73,226

Being [more than one-fourth of the native white adults."

Helper, in his valuable work,† gives some statistics of schools, libraries, and newspapers, which well deserve study. I propose to quote

* Quoted by Olmsted, vol. ii., p. 293.

† "The Impending Crisis in the South." Helper, being a Southern man, his opinions came with startling force. It was proposed in Congress to have it printed and circulated at public expense. This failed, but a subscription was raised, and 300,000 copies printed and sold before the Secession at a nominal price. It is said to have done more than anything to convert Anti-slavery men into Abolitionists.

the totals from some of his detailed tables. But first it will be well to compare the population of the Free and Slave States, in order to have the key to the full meaning of the facts revealed. Of course, when treating of education, the slaves cannot be taken into account at all; the proportions of the free population in the North and South are given as follows, by Helper, quoting the Census Tables of 1850.*

White and free coloured population of	
the North .	13,464,586
Do. South	6,412,605

The latter being thus about 600,000 less than half the former. Bearing this in mind, let us see what are the relative proportions as regards the means of education. In the same year, 1850, there were,—

Public schools in the Free States†	62,433
Teachers	72,621
Pupils .	2,769,901
Public schools in the Slave States .	18,507
Teachers	19,307
Pupils	581,861

Thus, with a free population rather less than half that of the Northern States, the Slave States have less than one-third the number of schools, and rather more than one-fourth both of teachers and of pupils. It must also be remembered that in the North the free population is another word for the entire nation; whereas in the South, in addition to the mass of half-educated free in-

* Helper, p. 116. The census tables of 1860 were not available when this work was written, nor could Olmsted make use of them. The proportion may be much the same.

† Ibid, p. 337.

habitants, we have the mass of utterly uneducated slaves, making a total of ignorance truly fearful to contemplate.

Where such is the state of schools, we need not wonder at the following comparison of the public libraries in the North and South. I quote the totals only, as before.* In 1850 there were Libraries other than private in the—

	Libraries.	Volumes.
Free States .	14,911	3,888,234
Slave States .	695	649,577

That is, with a free population approaching to one-half that of the North, the South possesses less than one-twentieth of the number of public libraries, containing about one-sixth of the number of volumes. This difference in the proportion between the numbers of the volumes and of the libraries, may probably be accounted for by the fact that, all the means of education being scattered widely through the country in the Free States, some so-called libraries may be only small collections for a rural district, and it is in these, which carry the most refining influences of civilisation to every cottage hearth, that the South is so eminently wanting; while the libraries of large towns may possibly be on a more equal footing in the Free and Slave States. If to these facts we add Olmsted's often repeated statement that among the small slave-owners he scarcely ever found a book, while in the houses of a corresponding class in the North (that of farmers cultivating their own land) they are considered an indispensable possession,

* Helper, p. 337.

we get a yet nearer approximation to the real diffusion of knowledge in the two sections.

The mode in which the population is scattered is in itself an almost insuperable bar to popular education. How can schools be brought within reach of a sufficient number of children, when the large plantations take up considerable tracts of land within whose borders knowledge is crime; while beyond are generally miles of uncleared ground, or of lands abandoned and fast relapsing into wilderness, through which are scattered the miserable class known as "mean whites," or "white trash," or "sand-hillers." These men, who find it hard to live, have certainly no inducement to send their children, perhaps miles off, to acquire knowledge which will neither better their condition nor raise them in the estimation of their superiors. The rich suffer also from this isolation. "A large majority of the richest cotton planters," says Olmsted, "live, when they do live at all, on their plantations or districts, almost the only white population of which consists of owners and overseers of the same class of plantations as their own. The nearest other whites will be some sand-hill vagabonds, generally miles away. . . . It is hardly worth while to build a bridge for the occasional use of one or two families, even if they are rich. It is less worth while to go to much pains in making six miles of good road for the use of these families." Schools for the poor will not exist, for the poor are too remote—schools for the rich could not be kept up, for their numbers are too few. Thus every slaveowner, while exercising unnatural tyranny over an alien race, is at the same

time helping to starve the bodies and souls of the poor of his own race. He has monopolised labour and degraded it, and the men who in a free country would live in honest comfort by the work of their hands are, under this system, transformed into sand-hill vagabonds, squatting on abandoned or forest land, raising a scanty subsistence by unwilling labour, pilfering on the outskirts of the plantations, selling spirits to the blacks, or training bloodhounds to hunt them; the only occasions, before the present War, when the rich planter and his poor white neighbour seem to have met on an amicable footing. In the Northern States children of all classes attend the same primary schools; in the South, school-education, for the reasons given above, is almost impossible; private teachers must be engaged, or parents who would save their children from the moral pestilence of plantation life among the negroes, remove to a distance; and thus leave every misery of the slave system to grow worse under the rule of subordinates. Another table of Mr. Helper's * gives us one striking result of the different degrees of intelligence thus cultivated in the North and South. The great fertility of mechanical invention in America has always been attributed to the dearness of labour. In the Slave States all skilled labour is still dearer and more difficult to procure than in the North, yet the following comparison of the patents issued for new inventions in the North and South shows how little the causes which stimulate the intelligence of the former can act upon the ignorance of the latter :—

* p. 340.

Patents issued on new inventions, 1859,

Free States	4,059
Ditto Slave States	625

In other words, among a free population of little less than half that of the North, little more than *one-seventh* of the patents for inventions are issued.

Places of worship are more numerous than schools, because the superstition of the slave can be turned into an instrument for keeping him in subjection, whereas education irrepressibly tends to freedom. But although upon this principle (when better ones fail) places of public worship are, I repeat, more frequent than schools, the following figures show still a great disparity between the Free and Slave States. Helper* on this occasion gives not the number, but the *value* of the churches. This, in 1850, was

In the Free States	67,773,477 dollars
In the Slave States .	21,674,581 ,,

That is, with a free population, as stated before, of little less than half that of the Northern States, the South spends on churches less than one-third of the amount spent by the North. And in this case the disparity is really greater than appears by this comparison, because to the free population of the South we must add some considerable proportion of the 3,200,364 slaves† who are supposed to share the privilege of worshipping their Creator. The following statement does not refer

* p. 340.

† The number given by Helper for 1850, to which year the estimate of the churches refers.

to slaves, but to that miserable class of mean whites mentioned before as the inevitable victims of a slave system. It is part of a Report read in a church at Charleston by the travelling agent of a Religious Tract Society, and is quoted by Olmsted (vol. ii., p. 293) from *De Bow's Review*, a Southern pro-slavery periodical,—“ Visited 60 families, numbering 221 souls over 10 years of age: only 23 could read and 17 write: 41 families destitute of the Bible. Average of their going to church, once in seven years. Several between 30 and 45 years of age had heard but one or two sermons in their lives. Some grown up youths had never heard a sermon or a prayer until my visit, and did not know of such a being as the Saviour; and boys and girls from ten to fifteen years old did not know who made them. All of one family rushed away when I knelt to pray, to a neighbour's, begging them to tell what I meant by it.”

Helper has a whole chapter on Southern literature, which places in a curious light their miserable deficiencies and the angry lamentations of Southern men over the fact. Olmsted speaks of the same, and quotes passages from Southern speeches and writings, in which the feeling that dictates the indignant confession of national short-coming in this respect is stated with great *naïveté*. It is prompted by no love of knowledge, no generous emulation with their Northern brethren, but simply by the fear lest in importing Free State publications, they should also import Free State opinions.* But in vain they clamour

* Olmsted, vol. ii. p. 358, also Appendix.

for text-books written on sound pro-slavery principles; the wish remains barren owing to the very ignorance they have thought it politic to foster, and which reduces the book-trade to insignificance. Were the desired writers found, there are few or no publishers; and the latter would be useless, for readers and buyers are too scarce to encourage enterprise. Even the material labour, the mechanical portion of bringing out new books, must be done in the North; a fact angrily commented upon by some of the writers quoted by Helper.* Mr. Stirling, in his excellent letters from the Slave States says, that at New Orleans itself he could not procure even the pro-slavery works which he had been recommended to read.†

Taking the facilities of intercourse as our next test of a nation's progress, we come to equally unsatisfactory results. The railroads before the War were generally in good condition, and made intercourse between the great cities easy in spite of enormous distances, but we must remember—first, that almost everything belonging to their construction and working came from the North, and had been established by Northern capital; and, secondly, that it is the by-ways of a country that afford the surest index to its state of civilisation. Great roads may be made as we see in despotic countries for purposes of government, while the scattered population lying off their lines derive little or no benefit from them. The civilising intercourse of the people depends on the

* Helper, Chapter on Southern Literature, especially pp. 412, 416, &c.

† p. 157.

roads which bring the trade and intelligence of the larger centres to the village and farmhouse. Olmsted gives at length the history of a journey he performed, in what was called a stage-coach, through part of North Carolina from Raleigh to Fayetteville,* and a most amusing account it is; but it is difficult to bear in mind, while reading it, that it does not relate to some half-cleared region in the far West instead of to a country as long settled as some of the most flourishing of the Eastern Free States.†

I "saw this day" he says in one place (p. 181), "3,000 barrels of resin, worth a dollar and a half a barrel in New York, thrown away because it would cost more to transport it than it would be worth. There was a single waggon with a ton or two of sugar unable to move, with six mules and five negroes at work upon it." Yet this is "the main road between the capital of North Carolina, and its chief seaport." I wish I had space to extract the account of that journey, with its description of the people, as well as the country; and also that of a ride in Virginia, in search of a gentleman's house, which he reached after weary wandering for a day and a-half on horseback, having started with the information that he had about a two hours' ride before him. Bad roads through uncleared forest, worn and abandoned lands, with melancholy dwellings scattered at long intervals, these are the principal characteristics, and "they pervade the Slave States everywhere, except in

* Vol. ii., p. 172.

† North Carolina, settled 1650; Pennsylvania, thirty-two years later; the New England States all within thirty years of the same date; Massachusetts, the oldest, in 1620.

certain rich regions, or on the banks of some rivers, or in the vicinity of some great routes of travel and transportation." Stirling remarks to the same effect; "Every step one takes in the South, one is struck with the rough look of the whole face of civilisation . . . notwithstanding the rapid prosperity of the South, and especially of the Gulf States, they have on the whole a very wild appearance." In short, "the rapid prosperity" of one branch of culture and trade has enriched one set of men, and when these successful traders have got their money, they set up for aristocrats, and exhibit, as their most obvious claim to the title, a perfectly feudal indifference to the welfare of the community at large. "During my whole course down the Cumberland and Mississippi rivers," continues Stirling, "up the Alabama, and across by rail from Montgomery to Mason, a distance of some 2,000 miles, I have been travelling for the most part in sight of the primæval forest of the continent. The cleared portion of the country is trifling, as compared with the unreclaimed;" and this, let us remember, in a country now convulsed with civil war, arising in great measure from the greed for new territory. Other nations want lands to plant, and settle, and make new homes for men; the trading chivalry of the Southern States want new land to save the expense of proper culture on the old; they want new regions to reap a few rich harvests and then to let them lapse into barbarism again, having gained no permanent advance except establishing a fraudulent* political ascen-

* This expression may require to be explained. I use it because the power thus acquired rests upon a false basis. Each State sends two members to the Federal

dancy. The latter was essential to the continuation of the system by which they are enabled to enrich themselves at the expense of the community.

The arrangements in towns are not, according to Stirling, much in advance of the road-making. "The towns," he says, (p. 178), "and even cities, which I have seen in the South, are ill-paved, and utterly in want of sewerage. New Orleans has nothing but open gutters to carry off its putrescent waters the want of scavengering is also atrocious. Even in the immediate vicinity of the St. Charles Hotel, heaps of garbage and unmentionable filth are suffered to

Senate; thus, any new half-cleared Slave State, containing a mere scattered free population, had as much weight as Massachusetts or New York in one House of the national Congress; while in the other—that of Representatives—to which the members are returned on a population basis, the undue influence was greater still; owing to the slaves being counted in a certain proportion. Five negroes were for this purpose reckoned as equal to three free voters. Suppose, therefore, a district in the South containing forty whites and 100,000 slaves, the latter would have counted for sixty votes; and the district have returned a member on an equal footing with a Northern member returned by the *bonâ-fide* votes of 100,000 freemen. Thus forty whites in the South, could balance the vote of 100,000 whites in the North. By this means every new Slave State added in an increased ratio to the undue influence of the South, till at the moment the War broke out they returned twenty-two members more than their free population entitled them to. The bitter mockery to the slaves of being then, and then only, reckoned as men, when their numbers could add to the power of their tyrants, needs no comment. A Southern writer said that all the evils the country has suffered came from the "single assumption, the sole elementary falsehood, that a negro is a black man," (Olmsted, vol. ii., p. 275); but we see he can be counted as such when occasion serves.

accumulate, in strange contrast to the marble grandeur of that imposing edifice . . . as compared with the roads, the railroads were, as I said before, good and well-managed; but when we compare the extent of the railways, contrasted with their extent in the North, we find the same disgraceful difference against the South." Stirling gives the following figures (p. 180), quoting from the acknowledged authority, "De Bow :"—

	Miles.	Population.
14 Free States	13,105	13,150,111
	or, 1,000 per	1,000,000
12 Slave ,,	3,991 ...	8,418,857
	or, 500 per	1,000,000

With bad roads, and a scattered population, it is not surprising that the accommodation for travellers should be of the worst description. Instead of the giant hotels, which often in the North form a sort of nucleus of a new settlement, the commonest inns are wanting through wide tracts of country in the South. Nor is it to be wondered at, when we remember that a considerable portion of the population, being slaves, are not allowed to travel; while another large portion are, by their poverty and ignorance, unable to travel, leaving a comparatively insignificant class in want of travelling accommodation. Foreign tourists who wish to see anything beyond the towns, find no difficulty in procuring introductions to the rich planters, and thus, too often return imbued with Southern notions and praising Southern hospitality. But we get a more just estimate of the latter, and of the scale

of comforts in the country, if we follow an obscure traveller like Olmsted, in his horseback journeys; and find what cold welcome and scanty fare greet the traveller over-night, under the name of hospitality, to be paid for in the morning at the rate of comfortable inn charges in a civilised country. Space will not allow me even to select among the illustrations of this state of things that abound in Olmsted's pages; rarely indeed was there decent comfort, and but once was payment refused. Nor should the payment be grudged; but at least it should be in proportion to the value received, and there should be less talk of the free hospitality of the South. The men in whose houses he thus paid for the use of a dirty bed in a room common to others, and for a supper and breakfast of Indian corn and bacon, eaten in the kitchen, or one living-room of the family, and among whom a candle to go to bed by was a luxury not always attainable, were men owning land and slaves, often calling themselves gentlemen, and fairly entitled, at any rate from social position, to be classed with the yeomen farmers of the North. But so little can they be compared with this class in their mode of living, or the scale of comforts in their dwellings, that Olmsted says "the man who owns half-a-dozen negroes . . . does not approach, in his possession of civilised comfort, the well-to-do working man with us who rents a small house, and whose property consists of its furniture, his tools, skill, and strength."* Not only are their gentlemen's houses almost bare of furniture, but skilled

labour of every kind is so scarce and so dear that the necessary blacksmith's work upon a farm is left undone. The same evil is "more obvious, if possible," he says, "in the condition of houses of worship, the schools, roads, and public conveyances;" finally, it accounts for what at first sight appears the marvellous neglect and waste of the natural resources of the country, and it no longer surprises me that a farmer points out a coal bed which has never been worked, in the bank of a stream which has never been drained, in the midst of a fine forest of timber trees, with clay and lime and sand convenient, and who yet lives in a miserable smoky cabin of logs, on a diet almost exclusively formed of pounded maize and bacon.* Once more be it remembered, he is speaking of a country which is even now prosecuting a bloody war for the sake of wider territory; and he is speaking of Virginia, one of the oldest settled portions of that country.

The absence of a free labouring population, with all its activity, and its industrial and domestic wants, is sufficient to account for this low scale of comforts. When a large portion of the population are slaves, fed on Indian corn and bacon, and clothed in the coarsest home-spun,—while another considerable portion possess nothing, and are too proud to work—it is obvious that no sufficient demand for the comforts of life can exist to create a supply; and again, the absence of local commerce and the bad roads act and react upon each other, and combine to keep the smaller planters just above the condition of

* Vol. i. p. 137.

the negroes and the mean whites. In other words, just above being kept like cattle; or stealing the food of other men's cattle to keep body and soul together without the indignity of labour. The state of trade and of agriculture are necessarily low in a country so devoid of civilised intercourse. So long as the natural fertility of the soil is unexhausted, good crops are raised, principally of cotton; but as soon as that natural fertility falls off, profits diminish, and soon the plantations are abandoned, slave labour being at once too expensive and too rude for the improvement of second-rate soils. The wretched ploughs "only rooting the ground like a hog or a mole, not cleaving or turning," * are frequently mentioned by Olmsted, as well as the small crops of corn the planters were contented with, as compared with what he got off his own land in the State of New York.

But what is worse than low farming is the culture which wastes the very soil itself. Olmsted, in another place, remarks what judicious labour might do to preserve the fertility of soils which under the present system "from ten to twenty crops of cotton render absolute deserts." But he adds, "with negroes at fourteen hundred dollars a head, and fresh land in Texas at half a dollar an acre, nothing of this sort can be thought of." Olmsted quotes the following from "Penner's Southern Medical Reports;" "The native soil of middle Georgia is a rich argillaceous loam, resting on a firm clay foundation. In some of the richer counties nearly all the lands have

* See vol. ii., p. 122.

been cut down and appropriated to tillage; a large maximum of which have been worn out, leaving a desolate picture for the traveller to behold. Decaying tenements, red old hills stripped of their native growth and virgin soil, and washed into deep gullies, with here and there patches of Bermuda grass and stunted pine shrubs, struggling for subsistence, on what was once one of the richest soils in America." Again, from another Southern authority,—*

"I can show you with sorrow, in the older portions of Alabama and in my native county of Madison, the sad memorials of the artless and exhausting culture of cotton. Our smaller planters, after taking the cream off their lands, unable to restore them by rest, manures, or otherwise, are going further west and south, in search of other virgin soils which they may despoil and impoverish in like manner. Our wealthier planters, with greater means and no more skill, are buying out their poorer neighbours, extending their plantations, and adding to their slave force. In traversing that county, one will discover numerous farmhouses, once the abode of industrious and intelligent freemen, now occupied by slaves, or tenantless, deserted and dilapidated; he will observe fields, once fertile, now unfenced, abandoned, and covered with those evil harbingers, fontail and broomsedge. Indeed, a country in its infancy, where fifty years ago scarce a forest tree had been felled by the axe of the pioneer, is already exhibiting the

* An Address before the Chunnemygee Horticultural Society, by Hon. C. C. Clay, Jun., reported in *De Bow's Review*, December, 1855.

painful signs of senility and decay apparent in Virginia and the Carolinas; the spirit of desolation seems brooding over it;” well may Olmsted ask, “what inducement has capital in railroads, or shops, or books, or tools, to move into districts like this, or which are to become like this?” And to touch again on the point which is so absurdly maintained, of the Southern planters being the aristocracy of America, what, may I ask, can be more unaristocratic than this neglect of the soil on which they were born, and to which family associations, if there are such, would surely cling? It is what might be expected of mere traders, holding land as they might hold any other commodity, from which a certain money value, and that only, was to be got; but would be as repugnant to the feelings of a real landed aristocracy as it is to the principles of real lovers of their country.

The backward state of trade, mining, and industry in general is extraordinary. Olmsted says,—(vol. ii, p. 336) quoting from a Southern paper, that the Slave States are “dependant upon Europe or the North for every yard of cloth, and every coat and boot that we wear; for our axes, scythes, tubs, buckets,—in short for everything, except bread and meat.”

Helper (p. 27) gives an amusing enumeration of the wants the unskilful South cannot supply. “We want Bibles, brooms, buckets, and books,” he says, “we go to the North; we want pens, ink, paper, and envelopes, and we go to the North; we want shoes, hats, handkerchiefs, umbrellas, pocket-knives, and we go to the North; we want furniture, crockery, glass, ware, and pianos, and

we go to the North ; we want toys, primers, school-books, fashionable apparel, machinery, modern tombstones, and one thousand other things besides, and we go the North for them all."

In the absence of industry they pride themselves on being an agricultural nation, and the following is the comparison of the total value of agricultural products in the North and South according to the census of 1850. See detailed tables in Helper, p. 62, &c. ; Free States, 214,422,526 dollars. Slave States, 155,219,421 ; a difference of more than 59 million dollars in that in favour of free labour. Helper further mentions one fact which is too curious to be omitted. In 1855, the cotton crop of the South was not equal in value by several millions to the crops of hay and fodder, raised in different parts of the Union.

Cotton . . . 136,000,000 dollars.

Hay and fodder 160,000,000 ,,

And in 1850 the hay crop of the North alone was worth more than the whole cotton crop.

Cotton . . . 138,605,723 dollars.

Hay . 142,138,908 ,,

Thus, when everything has been sacrificed to this one staple of Southern commerce ; when every other element of national welfare, national morals, and cultivation, have been trampled under foot for the sake of the inhuman institution deemed necessary for the successful culture of cotton, it results at last that this idol of the Southern heart is of less money worth than one out of many of the sources of wealth in the free North.

The value of certain branches of trade might, indeed, be no index in itself to the comparative condition of two countries; but in speaking of this cotton trade we must remember,—first, what it is now costing the country in blood and misery, and secondly, that those who for their own trading interest have caused that misery and bloodshed, are held up to our admiration as a chivalrous aristocracy. The one branch of trade that was ever increasing in value in the South, but of which less is said by their advocates, is the trade in slaves. On this subject let us again turn to Olmsted, who, as usual, speaks on no hearsay authority. “By comparing,” he says,* “the average decennial ratio of slave increase in all the States with the difference in the number of the actual slave population of the slave breeding States, as ascertained by the census, it is apparent that the number of slaves exported to the cotton States is considerably more than twenty thousand a year.” He adds in a note, “Mr. Ellison, in his work ‘Slavery and Secession,’ gives the annual importation of negroes for the ten years ending 1860 into seven of the Southern Slave States, from the slave breeding States, as 26·301.” It is amusing in the face of such statements to find people looking here and there for evidence concerning the separation of families in the sale of slaves; and listening to a denial in some planter’s family, or to a doubt from some easy-going traveller. Can anybody suppose for a moment that the Virginian slave-breeder is careful of the

* Vol. i, p. 58.

domestic feelings of his human cattle, when he is about to despatch a lot of field hands to their Southern markets. Or can anyone who meets those wretched gangs, as all travellers have met them, suppose that they are moving in family groups, and are so to be disposed of, when they reach their destination? Kindhearted men there as elsewhere will not use an evil power, even if it be in their hands, but this cannot affect the general state of a question which to the many is a question of commercial profit only.

The low state of all legitimate commerce, the stagnation of industry, the scantiness of all means of cultivation and intercourse, naturally result in a condition approaching to barbarism in the lowest class, and one not far removed from it in that just above them. Dull apathy, alternating with fierceness, duelling among high and low, and lawlessness in every shape. Stirling, writing from New Orleans, 29th January, 1857, says,—* “There has just appeared in the public prints a most remarkable document, entitled an ‘Extract from the Report of the Attorney-General’ of the State of Louisiana on the state of crime of in New Orleans. From this extraordinary paper it appears that in the year of grace 1856, crime was the ruling element of New Orleans society. Not only were frequent crimes committed, but peaceable citizens did not dare to accuse, nor magistrates to convict criminals; and as a natural consequence we find the first law officer of the State not only hinting at the possibility of Lynch-law, but absolutely suggesting apologies

for the proposal. The following is a list of some of the crimes committed in New Orleans. He says 'On the Docket of the First District Court there are now pending,

Cases of Murder .	14
„ Manslaughter .	3
„ Assault, stabbing, and shooting with intent to kill	68
	85

“In addition to which he says, ‘*A large number of homicides are committed by persons unknown, and many by persons known who escape arrest.*’

“New Orleans contained at that period 116,375 inhabitants !

“‘It is well understood,’ continues the Attorney-General, ‘that no affidavits are filed against the offenders, from an apprehension that any attempt to bring them to justice would lead to the sacrifice of the affiant’s life. A general sense of insecurity prevails in the community, and a conviction exists in the minds of many persons who have been grievously beaten, that it is better to endure present evil, than, by lodging a complaint take the risk of assassination.’” Stirling says that the elections gave a pretence to a complete reign of terror, but he adds, “I cannot see that any political principle is involved ; and I am inclined to think that the name and form of a political organisation are adopted, to cloak villanies of quite a personal and private character, . . . to such a pitch had the insolence of crime proceeded, unwhipped of justice as it was, that serious intentions were entertained of organising a committee

of vigilance.” The Attorney-General himself makes the following startling admission, that when the law which has promised to protect, fails to do so, “ then the same reason which justifies revolution, sanctions what is equivalent to revolution—summary justice on the criminals whom the law is unable to reach, or *who possibly represent the law.*” “ True enough doctrine, I believe,” adds Stirling, “ though it sounds queerly from an Attorney-General. The hint, too, in the last sentence, to the Mayor and his brethren in office, as to the possibility of a vigilance halter, hovers in a singular manner between the comic and the terrible.”

It may easily be supposed that this has not been the habitual state of New Orleans, but we may feel sure that no temporary causes could have produced such a state of things without a chronic evil to work upon. Crime had reached its climax, perhaps, in 1856, forcing this fearful admission from the Attorney-General; but the lawlessness causing the crime is not spoken of as any new thing. Let us note in passing, that the town of which these things are said is the very same which, according to some of our newspapers, we might have supposed resting in a state of Paradisiacal peace and order, till roused by the fierceness of General Butler !

With regard to another symptom of barbarism, Stirling remarks,* “ No one can study the social

* P. 266. Public opinion in England has come to regard duelling as a relic of barbarism; and it was literally a relic from past ages, when the military profession, honoured above all others, had given the law to opinion on questions of honour. But in a new country, and without even a standing army, no such excuse can be made.

condition of the Slave States of the South without being struck with the prevalence of bloody duels." He then enumerates four fatal duels which occurred within a short time of his arrival in the States, the last of which was fought "with double-barrelled guns at fifteen paces." Near Savannah, in Georgia, two fatal duels were fought with rifles in one week, in the first case (16th February, 1857) at a distance of twenty-five paces, in the second (on the 23rd of the same month) at forty paces. These very arrangements denote the fierce purpose of the antagonists. "In seven months" he enumerates "seven bloody encounters, six of them occurring in the three principal cities of the South." Further on we hear of worse forms of "this national proneness to acts of violence," such as "an affray between Messrs. Dickson, Morris, and Bishop, the two latter of whom were fatally shot." And again, the account of two "very warm friends," who, having quarrelled on politics, "closed for a fight, Thompson threw Pugh Pugh inflicted a terrible wound with a knife in the abdomen of Thompson, letting out his intestines. Thompson drew a pistol and fired, the shot missed Pugh, but took effect on the side of another man, passing through into the hip of another." The simple English reader might conclude that the said Pugh and Thompson were two low street ruffians; not so,—"the one was a merchant, the other a physician."

On one occasion, at an inn, Olmsted mentions* that "while at the dinner-table, a man asked, just

* Vol. ii., p. 53.

as one might at the North, 'if the steamer had arrived,' if there had been 'any fights to-day.' Before they had left the table a noisy conflict had begun below, to which everyone present rushed,—not to restore order, not to prevent mischief, but simply as spectators."

Olmsted rightly attributes to the influence of the slave system, not only the violence which leads to quarrels, but the want of honourable feeling which is so often shown in conducting them.* "How," says he, "can men retain the most essential quality of true manhood who daily, without remonstrance or interference, see men beaten whose position renders effective resistance totally impracticable—and not only men, but women too! Is it not partially the result of this, that self-respect seldom seems to suggest to an angry man at the South that he should use anything like magnanimity? That he should be careful to secure fair play for his opponent in a quarrel? † A gentleman of veracity, now living in the South, told me that among his friends he had once numbered two young men who were themselves intimate friends, till one of them, taking offence at some foolish words uttered by the other, challenged him. A large crowd assembled to see the duel, which took place on a piece of prairie ground. The combatants came armed with rifles, and at the first interchange of shots the challenged man fell, disabled by a ball in his thigh. The other, throwing down his rifle, walked towards him,

* Vol. ii., p. 231.

† A curious account this, of a set of *chivalrous gentlemen*!

and kneeling by his side drew a bowie-knife and deliberately murdered him. The crowd of bystanders not only permitted this, but the assassin still lives in the community, has since married, and, as far as my informant could judge, his social position has been rather advanced than otherwise from thus dealing with his enemy." If any one feels inclined to think this too monstrous to be true, let them remember the applause given to the ruffianly assault of Mr. Brooks upon Mr. Sumner, within the very walls of the Senate, on account of a difference in politics.

That life should be held of small account in such a society is not surprising. We find a commercial view taken of it, as of most other things in this chivalrous community. Slaves are "used up rapidly" by hard labour, or taken care of as a farmer cares for his stock, just according as the one or other method give a better return for capital. As representing money, they are at anyrate more worth considering than free labourers. Olmsted on one occasion* asked why some Irishmen were employed on rather a dangerous service, instead of negroes who were present. "The niggers are worth too much to be risked here," was the answer; "if the Paddies are knocked overboard, or get their backs broken, nobody loses anything."

The Attorney-General may complain at New Orleans of the contempt for the law among the whites; but between whites and slaves the

* Vol. i., p. 276.

boundaries of the law are so continually over-passed that it would alone suffice to create a habit of lawlessness in a country. The law gives no power to the master, for instance, over the life of his slave; but as negroes can give no evidence against a white man,* and as the cases of murder of a slave, or punishment tantamount to murder, occur within the bounds of plantations where no indifferent white spectator is present to witness to the fact, it must be very rarely indeed that the law can take its course. Again, the law does not sanction the burning of slaves alive; yet in 1857 a slave who had murdered his master "was roasted at a slow fire on the spot of the murder, in the presence of many thousand slaves, driven to the ground from all the adjoining counties"† A few years ago, after the burning of a negro in Knoxville, the deed was not only justified by the different papers, but the editor of one of them, a Methodist preacher, wrote "had we been there we should have taken a part, and even suggested the pinching of pieces out of him with red-hot pincers, the cutting off of a limb at a time and burning them all in a heap. The possibility of his escaping from jail *forbids the idea of awaiting the tardy movements of the law.*"‡ It has been denied, in spite of such statements in public journals, that slaves have

* This secures them against the slave. In North Carolina another statute secures them against freemen who are not also slave-holders. No such man is allowed to sit on the jury when a slave is tried for any capital offence. The master may kill his own slave when his passion is roused, without regarding the cost, but he will not allow a lower class of whites to decide upon his property. The curious results of this statute are given by Helper, p. 402.

† Olmsted, vol. ii., p. 349.

‡ *Ibid*, p. 352.

ever been burned alive. Olmsted adds in a note,* "the late Judge Jay told me that he had evidence in his possession of negro burnings *every year in the last twenty.*"

Can we expect anything but lawlessness and barbarism from a people when such scenes are enacted and justified? And what is the foundation of it all? That one fatal institution which the South is no longer content to defend as an ancient evil hard to get rid of, but which it praises and upholds and has made the "corner stone," of its new constitution. This it is which makes it necessary that any act of rebellion should be put down with a torturing vengeance that shall strike terror in the offending class and yet more surely brutalises the dominant class. Men encouraged thus to set the law at defiance in one case are not likely to hold it habitually in high respect, and every act or word that offends their opinions or their interests, will be resented with all the fierceness which results from living perpetually armed in defence of an unjust and inhuman system.† "Hence," says Olmsted, "no free press, no free pulpit, no free politics can be permitted in the South." This, as we know, is bad enough in its consequences when the restriction upon freedom refers to mere Government

* Vol. ii., p. 254.

† The custom of constantly wearing arms is, doubtless one cause of the many duels, and the sense of insecurity which has created such a habit in an agricultural and commercial people, unswayed by any old traditions of a warlike age as in Europe, speaks volumes. How general it is may be inferred from a fact mentioned by Stirling, that in the advertisements of "masked balls or similar public entertainments, it is frequently announced that the carrying of arms will not be permitted."—(*Stirling*, p. 273.)

questions; what must it be when the freedom denied is that of teaching justice and mercy, of spreading knowledge and the fruits of knowledge among the people? The utter darkness of popular ignorance is necessary for the very existence of the institution as it is now. Those who wield it for their profit live in dread of the enlightenment of the white no less than of the black population. Here, again, Olmsted furnishes me with Southern testimony; it is from *De Bow's Review* for January, 1850. "The great mass of our poor white population," says the reviewer, "begin to understand that they have rights, and that they, too, are entitled to some of the sympathy which falls upon the suffering. They are fast learning that there is an almost infinite world of industry opening before them, by which they can elevate themselves and their families from wretchedness and ignorance to competence and intelligence. *It is this great upheaving of our masses that we have to fear as far as our institutions are concerned.*" In a free country the awakening of the masses to the prospects and hopes of a prosperous industry would be hailed as a blessing—there, alone, where that accursed institution of slavery is to be maintained, such symptoms are seen with fear and distrust. That one sentence were enough to prove that the Southern States are exiled from modern civilisation for the sole advantage of that band of monopolising traders—known as the Chivalry of the South—who dare not face the consequences of national progress.

How well they have succeeded in avoiding this danger every traveller who has an opportunity of comparing the Free and Slave States

bears witness to. But on a point of this kind a few figures are worth pages of opinion. We have seen that the population of the Slave States in 1850 was rather less than half that of the Free States; yet their territory is larger.

Area of Slave States	. 851,488 sq. mile.
Inhabitants per square mile	. 21.91 „
Area of Free States	. 612,597 „
Inhabitants per square mile	. 11.29 „

In 1836 Michigan and Arkansas were both admitted into the Union; Michigan a free State, with a territory about half the extent of Arkansas. But the latter started in the race burdened with slavery, and the result was as follows after twenty years. In 1856, Michigan possessed three times the population, five times the assessed value of farms, farming implements, &c., and eight times the number of public schools that were possessed by Arkansas.*

“In soil, in climate, in minerals, in water power for manufacturing purposes,” says Helper, (p. 363), “North Carolina has the advantage of New York.” Yet the value of land as assessed for taxation in 1856, was:—

	dol.	c.
New York per acre	36	97
North Carolina per acre	3	6

that is, land was twelve times more valuable in the Free than in the Slave States.

A gentleman who travelled for the purpose of learning the comparative value of land under

* See Helper, pp. 114 and 115.

free and slave culture, gave Helper* the following statement as the result of his inquiries in six States which fairly admitted of being compared together :—

	dol.	c.
Ohio, value per acre	16	40
Illinois ,,	14	30
Iowa ,,	6	15
Kentucky ,,	3	8
Missouri ,,	2	7
Arkansas ,,	6	15

Corn and tobacco are both grown in Ohio and in Virginia, with the following results, according to the last census †—the money value of both crops together being :—

	Dollars.	Acres of improved land.
In Ohio .	5,127,223,565	from 9,851,943
„ Virginia .	3,564,639,385	„ 10,360,135

showing the superior value of free labour, and sufficiently accounting for the different value of land.

“In 1760†, as we learn from Benton’s ‘Thirty Years’ View’ the foreign imports into Charleston were 2,662,000 dollars, and Pennsylvania drew many of her supplies thence; in 1855, the imports into Charleston were 1,750,000 dollars, and those into Philadelphia amounted to 21,963,021 dollars; Boston has grown to be the second commercial city in the Union; Beaufort, in South

* See p. 113.

† See Olmsted, vol. ii., p. 552.

‡ See Helper, p. 24.

Carolina, with a harbour said to be the best on the Atlantic coast south of New York, is “an obscure village.”*

According to the census of 1850.

The products in manufacture, mining, and mechanic arts, stood.—

In North Carolina	9,111,245 dollars.
In Massachusetts	151,137,145 ,,

In 1856, they amounted in Massachusetts to 288,000,000 dollars, a sum more than twice the value of the entire cotton crop of the South.

Again, in 1850,—

The value of all real and personal estate in Massachusetts was	. 573,342,286 dollars.
Ditto North Carolina was .	226,800,472 ,,

Less than half, although it includes the value of the slaves, while no “price of blood” is included in the wealth of the New England States. Further significance is given to the above comparison if we compare the area and population of the two States. The population is from the census of 1850.†

	Square Miles.	Inhabitants.
Massachusetts	7,800	contained 994,514
North Carolina	50,704	,, 864,039

In 1790, there was a difference of 2,000 in favour of North Carolina.

I might give pages of similar comparisons, but must be content with one more.

* Ibid, p. 20.

† Ibid, p. 21.

“ At the taking of the last census,” * says Helper, “ the value of real and personal property in Virginia, was 391,646,438 dollars ; ditto, New York, 1,080,309,216 dollars.”

And here again, be it remembered, the valuation in the Slave States, inferior as it is, is immensely swelled by a species of property which is wholly excluded in the North. In 1790 and 1791 the exports from Virginia exceeded those from New York, while the imports were about equal in the two States. But in 1852 the exports from New York amounted to 87,484,456 dollars ; ditto, Virginia, 2,724,657 dollars ; or not much above *one-fortieth* ! In 1853, the imports of New York amounted to 178,270,999 dollars ; ditto, Virginia, 399,004 dollars !

That is, in sixty-two years the active Free State brought her import trade to nearly 450 times the amount of that of the gradually impoverished Slave State.

Nor let it be supposed that it is the lack of natural resources which thus keeps Virginia in the back ground.

Olmsted quotes as follows from a Southern paper † :—“ The coal fields of Virginia are the most extensive in the world, and her coal is of the best and purest quality. . . . accessible also with less labour and cost than down here. . . . her iron deposits are altogether inexhaustible, and in many instances so pure that it is malleable in its native state. . . . She has also extensive deposits of copper, lead, and gypsum. . . . Her rivers are numerous and bold.”

* Pp. 18-25.

† Vol. ii., p. 365.

Allowing that some of the superlatives used in the above quotation savour of the exaggeration of a writer wishing to excite the sluggish spirit of enterprise in his countrymen, there is more than enough to bear out the assertion that nature has been lavish in her gifts. But all in vain ! Her wealth remains buried, and the men who might enjoy it are reduced to " white trash."

I have in these pages purposely avoided speaking of the miseries of slavery, except as they affect the dominant race, and many of the darkest points even of this view are left aside; such as the licentiousness, with all its attendant evils, which is a no less inevitable growth of a slave system than cruelty and oppression. My object has been to collect a few facts which may serve to show, in as brief a space as possible, the withering influence upon a nation's life of this great iniquity; an iniquity fostered for the single purpose of bestowing wealth and power on one class in the community, to the ruin of the rest. They reap the profit, they despise the cost which their country pays for it. For this pitiful profit have they kept the fair regions they govern deprived of knowledge, of art, of trade, and manufactures, and roads; of almost all, in a word, which forms the heritage of civilised nations; and so speculated on the fierce passions of the ignorant as to rouse them in defence of the system which is their ruin. For this poor profit they have been content to let the wilderness, subdued by their fathers, claim its own again. For this they have stultified their own souls and perverted the moral sense of their children, so that slavery, feebly defended forty years ago, is now made a national boast. For

this, lastly, did they turn plunderers in places of public trust, traitors to their sworn allegiance to the constitution of their country and set kindred against kindred in civil war.

But blessed may that war yet be called which perhaps alone could have broken up the monstrous fabric of iniquity. When all its miseries shall have been endured and forgotten, it will yet live in the pages of history, as one of those few righteous conflicts which nations, from time to time, have waged, with freedom on their banner, and "Trust in God," as their watchword.